



Health and social care responses to the Department of Health Heatwave Plan

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Abstract:

Background The increasing risk of heatwaves in England poses a particular threat to the health of elderly people. A National Heatwave Plan has been produced to ensure that adaptation plans are established. The objective was to explore the perceptions of frontline statutory and voluntary sector staff on the feasibility of implementing the Heatwave Plan for elderly people in the community. **Methods** Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with 109 health, social care and voluntary staff from three London Boroughs. **Results** Few frontline staff were aware of the Plan. Most respondents did not perceive heatwaves to be a sufficiently frequent event to require prioritization within their routine summer workloads. They highlighted the complexities associated with defining vulnerability and identifying vulnerable individuals as well as barriers to implementation of the Plan. Respondents suggested a multi-faceted approach to interventions including a public health campaign, community engagement and increasing the responsiveness of statutory services. **Conclusion** The issues highlighted could hinder effective implementation of the Heatwave Plan. Ensuring continuity of care so that timely information can be recorded and disseminated may address the problems associated with shifting vulnerability. Best practice with respect to inter-sectoral collaboration should be identified and innovative multi-faceted interventions should be designed and evaluated.

Source: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdp059>

Resource Description

Communication: ☒

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience: ☒

audience to whom the resource is directed

Health Professional

Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Temperature

Temperature: Extreme Heat

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Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location: ☒

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Europe

European Region/Country: European Country

Other European Country : England

Health Impact: ☒

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Injury, Other Health Impact

Other Health Impact: heat stress

Medical Community Engagement: ☒

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation: ☒

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: ☒

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Elderly

Resource Type: ☒

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Timescale: ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment: ☒

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resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content